

Department of Auditor-Controller

Children's Group Home Ombudsman Activity Report

February 2013

Total Calls	<u>7</u>	General Statistics	
		Youth Callers	Time of Youth Calls
Calls returned within one business day	<u>7</u>	Female <u>0</u>	AM <u>0</u>
Calls resolved within 30 business days	<u>7</u>	Male <u>6</u>	PM <u>6</u>
Follow-up calls	<u>27</u>	Total Youth Callers <u>6</u>	
		Total Adult Callers <u>1</u>	

CALLS RELATING TO:

Collaboration Contacts/Referrals/Information

Probation referral	<u>1</u>
DCFS San Bernardino County	<u>1</u>
DCFS Ombudsman referral	<u>1</u>
TOTAL:	<u><u>3</u></u>

Personal Rights

<u> </u> Allowance	<u> </u> Health/Med, Dental, Psych Care
<u> </u> Clothing/Personal Property	<u>2</u> Respect <i>(Children Are Our Future and Teens Happy Home)</i>
<u>1</u> Contact <i>(Penny Lane)</i>	<u> </u> School/Community/Religious Svcs
<u> </u> Food	<u> </u> Social/Family Contact
<u>1</u> Living Condition and Respect <i>(Aiming High)</i>	<u> </u> Work/Job Skills
TOTAL:	<u><u>4</u></u>

Personal

<u> </u> Crime-related	<u> </u> Physical Abuse/Harm
<u> </u> Discipline	<u> </u> Fear, Threats, Intimidation
<u> </u> Discrimination/Isolation	<u> </u> Relationship
<u> </u> Emotional Issues	<u> </u> Sexual Abuse
<u> </u> Pregnancy/Infant Care	<u> </u> Substance Abuse
TOTAL:	<u><u>0</u></u>

Visits/Outreach

David and Margaret
O'Conner & Atkins
Penny Lane
TOTAL:

3

SYBIL BRAND COMMISSION MEETING
March 20, 2013
Reporting for the month of February 2013

AWOLs: There were **127** AWOLs involving **109** youth: **13** youth AWOL'ed more than once, with some AWOL'ing between 2 to 5 times.

42 remain AWOL	1 TERM
34 returned to GH	3 HOP
24 are in JH	5 CCP (Camp)

Outstanding AWOL's from previous months detained in February 2013:

9 youth were arrested/detained on an outstanding bench warrant from previous months: **6** are currently in JH. **2** are in Camp. **1** in GH.

Statistics and Findings regarding AWOLs in February

- 1)** 42% of the AWOL incidents were Hispanic males with a mean age of 16.8 years. The overall average age of youth who AWOLed in February was 16.8 years. Additional stats:

17%- Hispanic females with an average age of 17.1 years.
17%- Black females with an average age of 16.7 years.
16%- Black males with an average age of 16.5 years.
3%- White males with an average age of 17.6 years.
2%- White females with an average age of 18 years.
2%- "Other" race females with an age of 18.1 years.
1%- Chinese male with an age of 15.8 years.

Recommendation:

- For the past 7 months the average age and majority race of AWOLed youth remained about the same. Therefore, for all 7 months, Hispanic males above the age of 16 were around 40% to 50% of AWOL incidents. DPOs, Therapists, or other GH and County staff, should interview at-risk youth (mainly Hispanic males around the age of 16) to find out about certain feelings related to age, gender, or cultural stresses and consider possible solutions to decrease these feelings/stresses.
 - Inform DPOs and GH staff to be aware of the demographics that are at most risk of AWOLing. Research and identify possible methods or daily practices of assisting youth to come to a less stressful state of mind.
- 2)** In the previous months, a correlation was detected between the time youth AWOLs and the time it takes for the GH to report the incident and whether or not the youth remains AWOLed or is detained). To illustrate:

Correlation between these factors (dashes represent passing time, whereas, more dashes represent a longer period of time):

Time Awoled-----Time Reported-----Youth is detained either in a GH or JH.

Time Awoled-----Time Reported-----
Youth is still AWOL-----

Based on statistical findings, *the sooner the GH reports the AWOL, the more likely it is that the Youth is detained within the end of the month.* For efficiency, we can call the passing period between the AWOL incident and the notification to authorities of the incident the “**Idle Phase.**” **Idle Phase or IP can be defined as duration of time passed between any two actions.** Certain actions are dependent on each other for progress or success. In this case, the two actions are the reporting of the AWOL by the GH and the detainment of the youth. However, in February, GHs did a great job of reporting AWOLs within an average of 1 day of occurrence. Therefore, there were no comparable correlations to see if delayed reporting had an effect on detainment.

Recommendation:

- Continue monitoring monthly trends to verify a continuing trend.
 - Reiterate to GH staff and to legal guardians of youth the importance of reporting an AWOL as soon as the incident occurs. Specifically, all AWOLs should be reported within 24 hours in order to expedite the issuance of a bench warrant and the recovery of the youth. Statistics should be shared with GH staff to illustrate the real results of delayed reporting.
- 3) Certain GHs showed a higher percentage of youth AWOLs than other GHs. This was determined by taking the number of AWOLs for that month and comparing it to the number of beds available in the GH (population). It is important to note that some GHs had the same youth AWOL'ing several times, but these AWOLs were all counted. For **February**, some **GHs had a 33% or higher AWOL rate.**

Recommendation:

- Continue to track the frequency of AWOLs for each GH and see if a consistent patter remains amongst the same group homes.
 - Several confounding factors have to be controlled to identify a direct correlation between GH treatment of youth and AWOLs. For example, a high AWOL rate for a GH could only mean that that particular GH gets more high risk youth.
 - Investigate GHs that have an unusual high number of AWOLs compared to other GHs to see possible reasons.
 - Interview youth during investigation.
 - Create a plan of action based on results (directives for GH, staff training, etc).
 - Monitor GH to see if trend has stopped after implementation of programs or directives.
- 4) *Similar to last month*, there was no noteworthy trend or correlation found related to IP between bench warrant requests and bench warrant issued and effect on youth detainment (**IP- duration of time passed between two actions; see item #2 for explanation**): As in, for February, there was not a significant effect on the how long it took to issue a bench warrant and how soon the youth was detained. However, out of the bench warrants requested, they were all issued within 8 days. Also, there were slightly more arrests with bench warrants issued in the first 3 days after the request.

Recommendation:

- Considering previous months showed average to strong correlations, continue to track this data. Possible reasons as to why this did not reveal a correlation: there were far less bench warrant requests noted in PCMS. Therefore, there was less data to work with. Out of the 127 AWOLs, bench warrants were not requested for 64 of them because those youth returned within the same day or within a few hours.
- 5) As mentioned in the previous report, for February, we tried to find a relationship between AWOLs and a lack of contact with DPO in the first seven business days (or 10 regular days) of SP. 38 of the AWOLs were youth who had face to face contact within the first 7 days. 66 of the AWOLs were youth who had a face to face contact after 7 days. 23 had no face to contact prior to AWOLing. There was also a spike in AWOLs on the two week period of SP.

Recommendation:

- The data shows 70% of youth who AWOLed either had their face to face after 7 days of SP or did not have a face to face at all. However, this is more of a relational outcome, rather than a causal or direct correlation. It could be the case that for any youth in SP (including ones that did not AWOL), about 70% of them do not have face to face contact until after a week of placement. This data should continue to be tracked to see if this is a recurring trend.
- 6) Patterns regarding suitable placement dates and AWOL dates were also noted. Here is the data for February:

February:

20% AWOLed within 7 days of SP
16% AWOLed between 8 to 30 days of SP
64% AWOLed after a month of SP

- 7) **Final Remarks on AWOLs:** Similar to last month, all 'insignificant' AWOLs were also incorporated into the data this month (i.e. youth AWOL'ing for an hour). Therefore, the findings/correlations may have slightly shifted in different patterns compared to previous months. However, certain trends relating to race, age, and sex continued to mirror the previous months' data. DPO and number of AWOLs per DPO were also tracked, but not included in this report. There are other trends that could be revealed, such as correlation between Gang affiliation and AWOLing or incidents.

iTrack (SIRs)-

There were no child deaths or suicide attempts reported for the month of February in iTrack. The largest category for SIRs continued to be "other", providing no description of the type of incident the youth was involved in.

Recommendation:

- Instruct all iTrack users to NOT select the category "other," unless incident undeniably does not belong under any specific category. Another option is to remove the category "other," and instead add additional

specific categories (once it is determined why users are selecting "other"). Probation is currently discussing improvement ideas regarding iTrack with ISD software managers.

GROUP HOME MONITORING AND INVESTIGATIONS:

Current:

Ettie Lee- All sites are on a Do Not Use status, effective 2-15-13; all Los Angeles County youth have been removed.

Phoenix House is on an Investigative Hold as of March 13, 2013, with a Review Conference scheduled for April 5, 2013.

Child Abuse, we had 4 referrals, of which, one was **Unfounded** for Physical Abuse and **Inconclusive** for General Neglect. One was **Unfounded** for Physical Abuse and two are **Pending** final investigation results.

Allegation was **Unfounded** for Physical Abuse and **Inconclusive** for General Neglect. Youth was involved in a physical altercation with an 18 year old resident. Staff was busy completing morning duties, i.e., passing out meds, etc. Although, GH was in compliance with a staffing ratio of 1:6, Probation has recommended that the GH consider having another staff at the home during busy transition times as a part of their corrective action.

Allegation was **Unfounded**. Youth alleged that he was pushed by a female staff and fell and injured his left shoulder.

Allegation is **Pending**. Youth alleged that a night staff hit him during the overnight shift. Youth had no marks or bruising.

Allegation is **Pending**. Same youth as above, alleged that a staff drugged him and "butt raped him with lube". It is noteworthy to mention that this youth is currently on a psyc hold for evaluation.

Group Home Investigations:

We had **12** Group Home investigations during the month of February 2013, **5** were **Substantiated**, **3** were **Unfounded**, and **4** are still **Pending** investigation results.

Allegation was **Substantiated**. Youth was given his evening dosage of medication in the morning.

Allegation was **Unfounded**. Youth stated that he complained to the staff about bed bugs and they did nothing about it.

Allegation is **Pending**. During a DCFS Monitoring inspection, it was discovered that the Group Home is charging new clients for a welcome basket for things that Group Home should be providing to the youth for free. Probation went out with DCFS to conduct further investigation and are looking at a few more details before making a finding.

Allegation was **Substantiated**. The Group Home failed to notify Probation that a youth was detained by LAPD and subsequently released to his father.

Allegation was **Substantiated**. Youth fell and had a seizure at an amusement park. This incident was not reported to Probation in a timely manner in accordance to Exhibit A-III of the County Contract.

Allegation was **Unfounded**. Neighbor has made several complaints against the Group Home staff and youth, saying that she is being harassed.

Allegation is **Pending**. Youth alleged that staff screamed at him, used profanity and tried to hit him.

Allegation was **Unfounded**. Group Home failed to use a "medical refusal" form.

Allegation was **Substantiated**. Group Home was unaware of what a medical refusal form is. A CAP was requested.

Allegation was **Substantiated**. Two youths were given the wrong medication (each other's medication), one was a psychotropic medication (Risperdal) and the other an allergy medication (Benadryl).

Allegation is **Pending**. Youth was given the wrong medication on 2-15-13, and the incident was not reported until 2-22-13.

Allegation is **Pending**. Youth was not given any food during court hold over lunch break, not did staff prepare for it.

Monitoring:

We have **15** posted, **8** are still in various stages of approval, (total of 23 for the 2011-2012 year). Monitoring assignments are well underway for 2012-2013 year.

Permanency-

We are in various stages of preparation for **2 potential adoptions** and **4 potential legal guardianships** by the early part of next year.

In February 2013, we completed **0** Adoptions or Legal Guardianships.